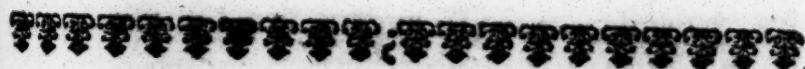




A N
E S S A Y
O N

Ecclesiastical Authority.



ESSAYS



Ecclesiastical Authority

IN WHICH THE PRESENCE OF AN INDIVIDUAL
POWER IN THE CHURCH, A DISMISSAL
IN THE ELECTION OF BISHOPS,

To the Inalienable Relation of a Bishop to
To the Inalienable Relation of a Bishop to

Ecclesiastical Authority
To an Obligation of continuing Commu-
nion with the Deprived Bishops;

And several other Things relating to the
Newest Separation from our Church
are particularly and impartially Examined

By JOHN TURNER, D.D.

Vicar of Greenwich, and Chaplain to
His Royal Highness the PRINCE

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN WATTS, at the Hole in
St Paul's Church-yard 1717.

A N 10
E S S A Y
O N

Ecclesiastical Authority :

In which the Pretence of an *Independent Power* in the CHURCH, to a *Divine Right* in the *Election* of *Bishops* ;

To the Invalidity of *Lay Deprivations* ;

To the Inseparable Relation of a BISHOP to his See ;

To an Obligation of continuing Communion with the *Deprived Bishops* ;

And several other Things relating to the *Nonjurors* Separation from our CHURCH, are particularly and impartially Examined.

By JOHN TURNER, ^N D. D.

Vicar of *Greenwich*, and Chaplain to
His Royal Highness the PRINCE.

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN WYAT, at the Rose in
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AN
ESSAY
ON

Ecclesiastical Authority:

In which the Pretence of an Independent
Power in the Church to a Divine Right
in the Election of Bishops;

To the Invalidity of Lay Deputations;

To the Insuperable Relation of a Bishop to
his See;

To an Obligation of continuing Commu-
nion with the Episcopal Ministry;

And several other Things relating to the
Necessary Separation from our Church;
are particularly and impartially Examined.

By JOHN TURNER, D.D.

Minister of Government, and Chaplain to
His Royal Highness the PRINCE OF

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A N
E S S A Y
O N

Ecclesiastical Authority.



THE many irregular and dangerous Practices of the Romish Clergy under the Pretence of an exempt Jurisdiction, and an Authority Independent on the Civil Power; caused the Governors of our CHURCH to take that Doctrine into their serious Consideration, at the Beginning of our REFORMATION; and in our xxxviith Article they have determined and settled it thus: That *the Queen's Majesty*, for this was done in Queen Elizabeth's Time, *hath the chief Power in this Realm of England, and all other her Dominions; unto whom the chief*

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Government of all Estates of this Realm whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all Causes doth appertain. And then to avoid Offence, and prevent Misconstructions, as the Queen had declared in her Injunctions, so the said Article, thus explains the forementioned Doctrine. We give not hereby to our Princes the ministering either of God's Word, or of the Sacraments; but only that Prerogative which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in Holy Scripture by God Himself; that they should rule all Estates and Degrees of Men committed to their Charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal. And this was so confirmed by the Canons in the Beginning of King James I's Reign, that if the Authority of our CHURCH might be admitted to be decisive in this Matter, we see plainly what that was, and is. But the giving so much Jurisdiction to Princes over Ecclesiastical Persons in Ecclesiastical Causes and Affairs, is complained of by some among us as an Encroachment, and a dangerous Compliance; an enslaving Principle, which controuls the Powers of the CHURCH, that, as they say, ought to be exempt and Independent.

THIS Point then, not being successfully enough determined by the declared Judgment of our CHURCH in Her Articles and Canons; must,

must, it seems, be brought under a farther Examination. And it must be considered not only as a Subject of Debate and Speculation, but, at this Time, it is become a Matter of the greatest Moment and Importance to our Peace both in CHURCH and STATE. All the Enemies of the late happy REVOLUTION, are gone into the Defence of that *Independent Authority*; to say no more. And all those other Notions and Opinions whereby the *Non-jurors* would vindicate their Separation from the Communion of our CHURCH, are built upon this Foundation. And it will not be easy to make them sensible, that this their Separation is Unjustifiable and Wrong, if this Claim be allowed good. On the other Hand, if it can be proved, That the CHURCH has no such exempt, and independent Authority, as is pretended; we shall strike at the very Root of their untoward Principles and Proceedings. In our Inquiry into this Matter,

I. THE first Thing that occurs to our Observation, is, That the STATE is found in the actual and full Possession of Authority over all their Subjects, and in all Affairs whatsoever, antecedently to the CHURCH's Claim. We are not born Priests, as we are

born Subjects; but are made such upon a sufficient Maturity of Age; and are therefore to consider what Share of Authority the Prince loses over any of his Subjects upon their Admission into Holy Orders; and what is the Foundation of the pretended Change. And as to this, we shall soon be sensible,

2. THAT there is Nothing in *natural* Religion to be pleaded as the Ground of such an Exemption or Independency. For according to that, Kings had a Right to the Priesthood also, and were the undoubted Supreme Judges and Determiners of all Affairs. *Melchisedech* and *Jethro*, we all know, were such. Nor does it appear, that there ever was any Separation of the Ecclesiastical Authority from the Temporal, before the *Mosaic* Dispensation, which was a Type of the Evangelical; and consequently no Room for any Debates or Disputes of this Nature in the first Natural State of Mankind. It must therefore all be laid in Divine Revelation and Institution. From whence I think it plainly follows,

3. *Thirdly*. THAT if the CHURCH has any Right to such an exempt and independent Authority as is now pleaded for, it

must

must be founded on that Divine Commission which CHRIST gave to his Apostles and their Successors, and by them to his CHURCH to the End of the World. The Way then to know what there is to be said for such a Claim, is, to consider well the Contents of that Commission which must be looked on as the great Charter of the Gospel, upon which all Her appropriated Rights and Privileges, Her Authority and Powers, Her Immunities and Franchises are built. The Substance then of CHRIST'S Commission to his Apostles was, That they should *make Profelytes of all Nations by Preaching God's Word*; that they should *Baptize them*, and by that Sacrament admit them into *Christ's Church*; that they should afterwards instruct and train them up in the Pure Christian Worship and Holiness, and in that Worship commemorate CHRIST'S Death in the *Eucharist*, according to his Institution; *bind Offenders, loose Penitents*, and by *Ordaining Ministers* make an effectual Provision for the perpetual Continuance of this Ministry which CHRIST has thus committed to'em, *to the End of the World*, according to his Appointment. So that *Preaching and Performing Divine Service* in the Worship of God; *Administering the Sacraments*; *inflicting Censures*, and *passing Sentence* upon enormous Sinners;

Matth.
xxviii. 19,
20.
Joh. xx.
21, &c.

ners; *Absolving* the Penitent from such Sentences and *Ordaining* Ministers. These and whatever other Particulars of Ministration in the Divine Offices of Religion, are by the special Commission of CHRIST in any Part of it appropriated to the Spiritual Governors of the CHURCH, become thereby, the Peculiar sacred Powers of the Christian Priesthood. Concerning all which it is allow'd and granted, 1. That the CHURCH does not derive Her Authority to the Execution of them from any Temporal Powers or Potentates; but from JESUS CHRIST alone by the fore-mentioned Divine Commission. 2. That as they were not originally derived from, so neither can they be taken away, or made to cease by any secular Authorities whatsoever. 3. That neither can any secular Powers of themselves execute these Divine and Holy Offices. The very End and Reason of taking these Holy Offices out of the Hands of the secular Powers, who before had executed them, and of vesting them in a distinct Set or Order of Men, still requires that they should continue so separated. And consequently, all the Powers specify'd in CHRIST's Commission, are the limited and *appropriated Powers*, which belong to the Spiritual Governors of the CHURCH alone; and which no
Tempo?

Temporal Potentates can take upon them to execute, without breaking in upon CHRIST's Institution, and subverting the very Ends and Reasons of their original Separation. And therefore, if no more had been intended by the *Independent Authority* of CHRIST's Church in the Execution of their Priestly Office than this, That they who derived not this Authority from the State, could not have it taken away by them; and that the secular Powers are by CHRIST's Commission excluded from the Performance of all the Divine Offices specify'd in it: The *Church of England* has declared Her Judgment in Favour of such a Claim; and we should have entred into no Disputes against it.

BUT then, he who himself has no Authority to baptize, may yet be a *competent Judge* of the Care and Fidelity of those who do. And he who has no Power to administer the Sacrament of the *Lord's-Supper*, or to ordain Ministers, may yet be capable of taking Cognizance of the Neglects, and of the Mifcarriages committed in those Performances. So that it is one Thing to minister in the Holy Offices and Service of the Church; and another to have Rule and Government, and a judicial Cognizance of the Care, Fidelity, and good or evil Conduct of those who do. This leads me to consider,

2. THAT besides the *Ministration* in Holy Offices, the Power of the *Keys* and *Ordination*, there are other Powers and Authorities claimed by the Church: Such are all the General Powers of Government, of Assembling in Synods, of Consulting one another on important Occasions, of making Laws or Canons; of appointing to particular Churches or Districts their proper Pastors; of determining religious Debates and Disputes; of prescribing Rules of Order and Discipline, &c. All which, as not being expressly mentioned in, or appropriated by CHRIST's Commission as the other divine Offices of Religion are, can belong to the Church only of *Common-Right*, as it is a Society; and as such Acts of Government are the constant and *common Rights* of every Established Community.

A SOCIETY cannot subsist without Government; as therefore the Christian Church is by CHRIST's Commission constituted a spiritual Society there is no Doubt, but that it thereby obtains a certain Right to the Exercise of all such Authority in Government as other Established Communities are usually possess'd of.

THE Question then is, not whether the Church has a Right to the Exercise of such Authority, for it is undeniably evident that she has : But what is the Foundation of that Authority, and how far it will hold good to the Exclusion of the secular Powers. Now unless it could be made appear that these Powers of Government are by CHRIST'S Commission specify'd and appropriated to the Priesthood as the divine Offices of its Holy Ministration are : There can be no other Reason or Ground of this Claim than that of *common Right and Necessity* to the Support of this spiritual Community and to the Attainment of the great End for which it was ordained.

WE see therefore that in this Controversy a great regard is to be had to the Distinction here made between the divine Offices of the Christian Priesthood and the more General Powers of Government. The former are allow'd to be *appropriated* to the Orders of the Bishops and Clergy only. The latter are those Powers and Authorities which our present Controversies and Dissentions are about. And if I am right in Stating the CHURCH'S Claim and Title thereto, I shall certainly be Right in the Determination of this dispute. So far as they are *Necessary* to the

due Execution of CHRIST's Commission, the CHURCH has undoubted Right thereto. And if Dr. *Hickes* and his Friends had gone no farther in claiming a Right to the Exercise of *Ecclesiastical Authority Independently on the secular* than as that shall be found *necessary* to the Propagation and Establishment of Christianity; I am apt to think that all Christians would have come into it. I for my Part, can make no Scruple to affirm, that by Virtue of Christs Commission to his Apostles and their Successors to *Preach* and Propagate the Gospel, and to *gather Him a Church* thereby: They have an undoubted Right and Authority to do every Thing in the Exercise of their Spiritual Offices, which shall be found *necessary* to the Support of the Christian Faith and CHURCH. But if Men will not content themselves with this, without going farther; if they will claim an Universal Inherent Authority of doing every Thing in Matters of Religion, if they please, by themselves; and to be the sole Proper and Rightful Judges of all Ecclesiastical Causes, and Matters; with a divine Right to exclude the Secular Authority at their Pleasure, and to make *Null* and *Invalid* every Thing that is done by the Temporal Powers in these Affairs without the Clergy's Approbation and Consent: This I think

think a most Unreasonable and Unrighteous Demand ; and I have these six Things to plead against it.

I. SUCH a Claim seems contrary to the very Nature of the Powers that we are now reasoning about. They are not the peculiar *appropriated* Offices of the Priesthood, such as *Ministring* in the Divine Service, administering Sacraments, &c. which we have already owned Kings and Princes to be excluded from ; But they are the CHURCH's common Powers of Government which belong to Her only of common Right, and to the General Exercise of which other Societies are entitled as well as the CHURCH. Now these general Powers of Government are no otherwise to be exercis'd *exclusive* of and *Independently* on the Secular Authority, than the *Necessity* of Affairs requires them so to be. And that Authority which has no other Reason or Foundation then its *Usefulness* or *Necessity* as a *Means* to the attaining to such an End, certainly loses a great deal of its Force and Obligation in all those Instances in which it ceases to be useful or necessary, and where the End may be as effectually obtained without it. And this is the true Reason of all that Difference which is observable in History in

the Practice of the Bishops and Governours of the *Christian Church* in the Exercise of these very Powers under Heathen and under Christian Emperors and Governours. When their Heathen Governours cast them off and left them to themselves, they then manag'd all Things by themselves, the *Necessity* of their Affairs requiring that they should so do. But when the Christian Emperors took the Affairs of Christians into their Cognizance, and made Laws, and pass'd Sentences, and executed Judgment therein: The Christian Bishops and Clergy unanimously gave Way, and very readily submitted thereto.

It may possibly have some weight with some of my Readers to observe, that even Dr. *Hickes* in the Collection of Papers lately Published by his Friends, and which were Written and Published on purpose to carry up the Powers of the Priesthood, and an *Independent Authority* as high as possibly he could: Yet comes in to this Distinction of the CHURCH'S Communicable and Uncommunicable Authority. Whatever indirect Ends he might have to serve in his Endeavours to Support the Spiritual Authority of the Nonjuring Deprived Bishops: Yet he was too well acquainted with Primitive Church

Church History to think, that all the *Christian Churches* Authorities are alike exclusive of the Secular Powers. And accordingly as I find him quoted p. 27. he allows ; *that the Church on valuable Considerations may in some Cases modify the Exercise of Her Just Power, and make Grants and Concessions to the State.* Pray mind that, for if Princes and States may on any Considerations be admitted to a share of the *Churches Just Power* : Then it is plain and evident that in such Cases it is not JESUS CHRIST, that by his Divine Laws excludes them, but these Church-Men themselves. But let us see what Instances of this kind he mentions, and they are such as these ; That the CHURCH shall consent not to call Synods without acquainting the King, and obtaining his Leave if Possible ; not to make Foreigners, or Clerks of a Foreign Allegiance Bishops ; to make no Bishops but what shall be supposed worthy of the Kings Nomination ; to give the Builders and Endowers of Churches the Honour and Privelege of presenting worthy Clerks to supply the Cure of them ; and Noblemen to Erect Chapels, and to choose Chaplains for their Families. There are then it seems Cases and Considerations, in and upon which, notwithstanding all the sacred Powers of the CHURCH, Kings may have Authority, in calling Synods, in Nominating
Bishops

Bishops, and in the *Presentation of Clerks to the Cure of Souls*. Here I would ask in what Cases, and upon what Considerations any of these Kings or Nobles may be allowed to administer Sacraments and Ordain Ministers? I know that this will not be allow'd at all by any Means, or on any Considerations whatever. It seems then, that in Dr. *Hickes's* own Opinion, altho' some of the Powers of the CHURCH are Exclusive and Uncommunicable to Lay Hands: Yet others they may be admitted to a share of, if the Consideration be but good, and the Authority not abused. Now I would willingly know, what is the true Foundation of this Difference, which Dr. *Hickes* himself admits of? I would have it openly declared, whether CHRIST'S Commission has Appropriated these Powers to the CHURCH which may be so *modified*, and has Excluded Secular Potentates from them, or on what foot that *Modifications* stands. And at the same time let them add, why the Influence of the Civil Magistrates Authority to preserve the Peace and Safety, and good Order of a Kingdom, may not be allowed as just a Consideration and as good a Reason of his Exercising Authority in such affairs, as any munificent act of Beneficence or Protection?

BUT

BUT to bring this Debate with Dr. *Hickes* and his Friends to a Short Issue ; Either JESUS CHRIST by his Gospel, and his Divine Commission to his Apostles has Appropriated all Ecclesiastical Authority to the Clergy only, and Excluded the Secular Power from it, or he has not. If he has, and the Certainty of that be made appear, then they ought on no Consideration whatsoever to be allowed any Share therein, because that is acting contrary to CHRIST's Commission and Laws. But if he has not, then the CHURCH has no Divine Right at all of Excluding their Authority and acting Independently. The Consequence of this is plain and undeniable. For to Exclude the Jurisdiction of the Secular Powers where CHRIST by his Divine Commission has not Excluded them, is to do it without Reason and contrary to Justice.

But that which Dr. *Hickes* and his Friends lay the greatest Stress upon is ; 1. The Nature of the Society ; and, 2. The Powers by which it Subsisted in the Beginning.

1. As to the Nature of the Society they tell us that it is CHRIST's *Spiritual Kingdom or Incorporation, which had a Being Independent on the Secular Power for above three hundred years before the Government of it was interwoven with*
the

Vindication Non-Juring Church.
prop. I. II.

the secular Government and Laws. I grant all this to be true ; but because there seems to be great Stress laid on this *Independency* so much talked of ; I desire that it may be considered what it means. For in a Christian Country, the CHURCH and STATE are not two Distinct Societies like the Kingdoms of *France* and *Spain*, made up of different People and Subjects inhabiting different Territories : but are One and the same Body of Men considered in two different Relations and Capacities. The same Persons are at once Members of the Church and Subjects of the State, and so constitute but One Society of Men under two capacities of Government.

AND Even in this twofold Capacity, their Affairs, their Duties and Obligations are so mixt and interwoven, that in a Christian State it is scarce Practicable for the Church to Govern and Manage her spiritual Affairs without influencing and affecting the State. Nay in the Extent of *spiritual Power* now claimed, it is absolutely impossible so to do. So that this Contest for an Independent Authority in the Government of the Church, is nothing else but a Struggle to take the Management of Religion and all religious Affairs out of the Hands of Kings and Princes. And if they once do this, the STATE must be brought

brought to depend upon the CHURCH, because the CHURCH will be independent on the STATE; and so it would be in a very fine Condition. In short, while such a Power is contended for, the CHURCH and STATE must inevitably clash and disagree, and there is no Way to consult and secure the publick Peace, without a Subordination of the one to the other in their Administration of Government.

AND as to the CHURCH's having a *Being independent on the secular Power for the first three hundred Years*: it proceeded only from the *Necessity* of her Circumstances and Affairs at that Time, that She acted independently on the secular Potentates. It was when Christianity was in a State of Persecution, and the secular Powers refused to intermeddle in Her Government. Then, it is very true, that She subsisted of Herself; and this proves undeniably, that the CHURCH has a Capacity so to do when Need requires. But it does not prove, that it is a desirable Thing for Her to be in such a Case; or that She has a Divine Right and Power to exclude the secular Potentates, if they think fit to interpose their Authority. But I shall speak more particularly to this hereafter. I am now only shewing what weak and insufficient Reasons Men

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allege for an Independent Authority in the Church; of which, I think, this is a very great Instance; that because She did once so subsist out of *Necessity*, therefore She must always do so, out of *Choice*, or has a *Divine Right* so to do, when ever She pleases.

2. BUT they tell us, That this *Spiritual Kingdom of CHRIST*, is also a *Royal Priesthood*, a *Kingdom of Priests*, the chief Priests of which are *Regal Priests*, or *Kings*, as well as *Priests unto God*. That their Government in their several *Dioceses or Districts*, is *Monarchical*; and the *Bishops* are therein the *supreme Representatives of CHRIST*, his *Legates*, or *Vicererents*, in regard to whom, *Christian Emperors and Kings* are their *Spiritual Subjects and Inferiors*, and ought to be obedient to them. All these high Titles, and big Words, are evidently intended to possess the People with a Notion, that *Kings and Princes* must have Nothing to do with *Bishops*, unless it be when the *CHURCH*, in *Consideration* of some valuable Advantages and temporal Endowments, will *modify Her Power*, and indulge them in a Share in Government on their good Behaviour. In any other Case, it is sacred; *favete linguis, ite Profani*, say not a Word of Jurisdiction or Authority; be gone, it is the *Ark of GOD*, touch it not, lest you die.

1 Pet. ii.
9.
Prop. 18.
21.

die. Now in answer to all these high Strains, for the Satisfaction of modest, sober, christian Minds, let us enquire,

I. WHAT St. Peter means, when he tells us of all Christians ; for he does not speak of the Governors of the Church alone, but of the whole Community of Christian Believers; when he says, *Ye are a Royal Priesthood*. In the fourth Verse of that Chapter, he vindicates CHRIST himself from the Contempt that Unbelievers had poured out upon Him; and he calls Him, *a living Stone, disallowed indeed of Men, but chosen of GOD, and precious*. And then, for their farther Consolation under the Reproaches that were thrown upon themselves for Believing in Him, he adds. *Verse 6. Ye also, as living Stones are built up a spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*. And again, ver. 9. *Ye are a chosen Generation, a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, an holy Nation, a PECULIAR PEOPLE, that ye should shew forth the Praises of Him, who hath called you out of Darknes into his marvellous Light*. Whatever, therefore, might be intended by that Expression under the Jewish Dispensation when it was first used, it is plain, that St. Peter intended no more by it, than

1 Pet. ii.
9.

to set forth how honourable and favourable a State all Christian People are in with God, whom He loves and esteems, and counts dear to Him, even as the Priests of His Congregation. And what is all this to the making Bishops *Kings* and *Princes*, and Lords of the Flock of CHRIST, with a *Supremacy of Power*? Not but that I readily allow, that the Authority which CHRIST first committed to his Apostles, was by them put into the Hands of Bishops; and by them is convey'd down to us; and that they are under CHRIST the supreme Governours of this spiritual Community, whenever the secular Potentates refuse to concern themselves therein. And very great Deference, Regard, Honour and Submission ought to be paid to them all on that Account.

AND yet, methinks, this high Style, and lofty Language, does not mighty well suite the meek, modest Temper of the Gospel, in that there is not much of this grand Strain in the *New Testament*. The *Royal Priesthood*, we have seen, will do them but little Service, in that it respects every private Christian, as well as the *spiritual Governors* of the CHURCH. And altho' we are call'd *Ambassadors of Christ*, and *Stewards of the Mysteries of God*; yet this our Christian Embassy must be managed with

all imaginable Meekness and Humility. St. Paul after a very small degree of Authority in threatening the Corinthians corrects himself thus; *Not that we have Dominion over your Faith.* And St. Peter very affectionately exhorts *1 Pet. v. 3.* the Clergy, not to carry themselves *as being Lords over Gods Heritage, but Examples to the Flock.* But Dr. Hickes, and his Non-juring Friends, are for lording it over Emperors and Kings, their spiritual Inferiors and Subjects, who ought to be obedient to the Bishops and Clergy in what concerns Religion. Not so the Meek, the Blessed, and Humble JESUS, who teaches his Apostles thus: *The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them; but it shall not be so with you. But he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.* *Luke xxii. 26.* We may see in the Style we use, what Manner of Spirit we are of; and how far we are degenerated from the Original Meekness of our Holy Religion. And yet at last, after all this great Talk, if it does not infect the Minds of the ignorant, common People, it is nothing to the Purpose. For when all is said, that can be said this Way, the main Question still remains to be argu'd; which is,

2. WHETHER all the Fullness of the Power which the Clergy can be supposed to have in the spiritual Affairs of the CHURCH, does amount to an Exclusion of the supreme Jurisdiction and Authority of the STATE? Whether CHRIST ever intended that the Government of the Church should be so managed by *spiritual* Men alone, the Bishops and Pastors of it, as that the *supreme secular Powers* should have no Right or Title to any Judicial Authority therein; but be excluded from that, as well as from the Divine Offices of the Priesthood? And the Determination of this Matter, must not be made by any high Strains of Rhetoric, or lofty, metaphorical Titles that may be used; but from the Jurisdiction and Authority that are really given and *appropriated* to them in Holy Scriptures. So that unless it could be proved from thence, that the general Powers of governing the Church, are by CHRIST's Commission *appropriated* to the Priesthood as the *Ministration* in Holy Offices is; all the rest that can be said, will be to no Purpose. For it must be unreasonable and unjust to exclude the Authority of secular Powers, where GOD and CHRIST have not excluded them. To this Argument, let me add,

II. THAT

II. THAT such an exempt, *independent*, exclusive Authority in the CHURCH, where it is not highly necessary to the Support of Religion, is indeed very absurd. It has Something worse in it than erecting *Imperium in Imperio*; it is actually setting up the Kingdom of God the SON, in Opposition to that of the FATHER, and in Derogation of His supreme Authority and Power.

DR. HICKES and his Friends tell us, That the Christian CHURCH is the *spiritual Kingdom and Body of Christ*. I grant this to be very true; and so is the Government of the whole World, by the temporal Powers of it, the Temporal Kingdom of God the FATHER, *Who is Lord of all the Earth, the only Potentate*, Josh. iii. the King Eternal; *whose Kingdom is an ever-* ^{11, 13.} *lasting Kingdom, and ruleth over all*. In this Kingdom the Civil Powers are *the Ordinance of God*, for the Good of Mankind; they are the *Ministers of God for Good*, to whom all ^{1 Tim. vi. 15, & i. 17.} *must needs be subject for Conscience Sake*. And ^{Psal. cxlv.} *therefore for the Ministers of CHRIST to op-* ^{13.} *pose and lord it over the Ministers of GOD* ^{ciii. 19.} *the FATHER, is to invert the sacred Order of* ^{Rom. xiii. 2, &c.} *Things, and to forget the Subordination of the SON to the FATHER.*

GOD, for the Honour of the ever blessed Redeemer, was pleased to grant Him a Kingdom

dom within his own Dominions, with Rule and Power over *all Mankind* in order to our Salvation ; and to the effectual Establishment of it, to appoint Him *Powers* and *Ministers* of his own ; and to take away from temporal Governours the Ministration of those divine, and sacred Offices which they before performed. But as it does not appear by CHRIST'S Commission, that He has appropriated all the Powers of Government in his CHURCH, to the Bishops and Clergy only, together with the Authority of those sacred Ministrations ; it is certainly very wrong in them to assume a Power of excluding universally the Authority of the FATHER'S Ministry. The Dispensation of the SON, however Excellent and Glorious, as blessed be GOD, it is, ought yet certainly to be administered in Subordination to that of the FATHER. And to pretend the contrary, must needs be very absurd and displeasing to Them both.

AND yet this Absurdity, as great as it is, is carry'd still farther ; and the Abettors of it not content with the Claim of an *independent* Power only, plead for a *superior* Authority in the Church ; because that is *spiritual* and extends to the Souls of Men. This is not only in Effect to deny the Civil Magistrates Concern

Concern in Matters of Religion, and where the Souls of Men are affected: But moreover, it is to set up the SON *above* the FATHER, by making the *Ministry* of the SON *superior* to that of the FATHER. This is what I cannot but think unreasonable, and contrary to the Design and Intention of Them both. It is under the Favour and Protection of the SON, to reject the Authority and Supremacy of the FATHER; than which scarce any thing can be more offensive to him. To this let me add,

III. THAT the true Kingdom of GOD, and the Religion of JESUS CHRIST established therein do not appear to be at all more strong and safe, and secure from Corruptions by such an Independent Authority than they would be otherwise.

REMEMBER we are here disputing only about an *independent Power* in the Government of the Church, and the Management of its Affairs for the Success of Religion. It would therefore, methinks, be much in Favour of such a Pretension, if it could be made appear by long Experience throughout all Ages, that the Purity of this Holy Religion had always been better secured that Way than the other. And that it had as constantly suf-
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ferred when ever it was brought under the Direction and Jurisdiction of the STATE. But alas! this was true only in the first Ages of Christianity, when the Governors of the Church had more extraordinary and miraculous Assistances from the Holy Ghost. Then indeed, the Purity of Religion was effectually preserved, and the Word of God mightily grew and prevailed. But when the essential Principles and Laws of Christianity were committed to Writing, and the Clergy were to gain spiritual Knowledge by Reading them; when the extraordinary Powers of the Holy Ghost began to be removed, and Men were assisted, as they are now, only by the ordinary Influences thereof; and in Consequence of this, the spiritual Governors of the Church were subject to the same Passions, and Infirmities, and Temptations as other Men now a-days are: Religion soon felt the Fruits of this, and its genuine Purity, soon began to decay, and declined apace. Till by Degrees it grew so corrupt that to use St. Paul's Words, on a like Occasion, *The whole Creation groaned and travailed in Pain together, waiting to be delivered from this Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God.*

Rom. viii.
*1, 22.

So that whatever Advantages Christianity received by the pure Faith, and constant Patience, by the great Integrity and Piety of the Primitive Christians in the *three first Centuries*; it suffered at least as much in after-Ages, by the evil Conduct of those who were in Possession of those Spiritual Powers. To give one notorious Instance of this; I would desire these learned Gentlemen to read the History and Acts of the second Council of Nice, and there to consider by whose Over-bearing Authority the Idolatry of Image-worship was first brought into the Church of CHRIST. Such Instances shew too plainly that the true Advancement of CHRIST'S Spiritual Kingdom, depends more upon the Fidelity and Piety of its Ministers, than upon the *regal, independent, Authority.*

IF therefore the *Non-jurors*, in Vindication of their *Schism*, had not contracted an Habit of Writing Paradoxes, One would wonder mightily to hear them impute the *Atbeism* *Deism*, *Heresy*, *Schisms*, *Infidelity*, *Profaneness*, *Dr. Hick. Collect. pag. 29.* and *Immorality*, that are found in this Land, to the taking away of this supreme, independent Power of the Church. Let any Man look Abroad into *Italy*, *Spain* or *Portugal*, there he will find the Government of the Church in the Hands of those very Men,

whose Right to it Dr. *Hickes* contends for; and that too, with greater Immunities and Exemptions than he has pleaded for. And yet in all these Kingdoms, he will find as much Infidelity and Irreligion, as scandalous Vice, and Immorality, and Profaneness, as in any Part of *Christendom*. Only perhaps with a little more Reserve for Fear of an *Inquisition*.

IN short, That our Discipline is too much lost, we all complain, as well as the *Non-jurors*. But that the Matter would certainly be mended, by putting it wholly into the Hands of the Clergy with an *independent* and unrestrained Authority, is what cannot be allowed: Because where the Church has that Power, Religion is more infamously corrupted than in any other Places of the *Christian World*.

LET us but reflect what Opposition the Reformation of it met with here at Home, from those very Men whose independent Power is now pleaded for. And with how much Difficulty it was rescued out of their Hands, that it might be restored to its original Purity. The *Church of England* with all its great *Excellencies*, and valuable *Constitutions*, was thus Reformed; the Spiritual Powers being ruled and governed by the
Secular

Secular in the Exercise of their Ecclesiastical Authority. And has the CHURCH yet a Divine Right to take the Judicial Cognizance of Religion wholly out of the Hands of those Men, by whom it has been preserved from Destruction? What Reason or Necessity can there be for that? If by these Means the Government of the CHURCH should once again fall into ill Hands, as it has done in former Times; it may in the unhappy Event be found setting up for Authority to *corrupt* Religion, instead of *preserving* it. And that too without leaving the Secular Potentates a sufficient Authority to retrieve and reform it a second time. And this also is a just Exception to the Reasonableness, and Righteousness of such a Claim.

IV. SUCH an Exempt *Independent Authority* in the Church, seems wholly Inconsistent with that Interest and Care and Concern for Religion which Christian Kings and Princes are always supposed to have; and the Regulation and Defence of which is one great End and Purpose of all their Authority. Till I see farther Reason against it than what has yet been shewn, I cannot but believe that the Civil Government in their Way, and by a due Exercise of their Power, is concerned
for

for the Good of Mens Souls, to promote Virtue and true Religion as well as the Bishops and Pastors of Christ's Flock. And if they are, then, to exclude their Jurisdiction in all Ecclesiastical Causes and Matters, is to rob them of one great Part of their Sovereignty. It is in effect to confine all the Authority of Princes only to the Preservation of Peace, and Order, and Justice in Human Societies without any Regard to God and Religion. And I know of no good Reason that can be given for this. For altho' GOD the FATHER, for the Honour of our Blessed Redeemer, and the more effectual Accomplishing our Redemption, has given him a Church and a Kingdom within his own Dominions, and allowed Him his Proper Ministers and Governors of this CHURCH under his own Divine Authority: Yet I hope these Gentlemen will not say that this carries along with it a Devolution of all Power and Authority in religious Affairs, from Princes to Bishops, from the Governors of the State to those of the Church. And if it does not, then the Secular Powers ought not in any such Affairs to have their Authority and Jurisdiction excluded. That would be to subvert one of the main Ends of their Institution, which was, That *under them we might live*

live peaceable and quiet Lives in Godliness as well as in common *Honesty*. These Gentlemen I know will allow Kings and Princes to exercise all their Authority in the *Defence* of the Church, and for the *Protection* of its Powers, and the *Support* of it in the Execution of its Laws, altho' nothing to its Disadvantage. And is it so then at last, that by virtue of Christ's Commission, Kings and Princes have no more to do with Religious Matters, than only under the Directions of the Church to minister to the *Support* of the Spiritual Jurisdiction, when ever they think fit so to *Modify* their Power? I hope that all Christian Emperors and Kings will be sensible what Honours and Favours such Churchmen intend them, in admitting them to so great a Privilege? And must they in all other Cases be discharg'd of all Regard and Concern for GOD and RELIGION in the Government of their People? Sure I am, that it was not so under the Jewish Dispensation, when this Separation of the Priesthood from the Secular Powers first began. Kings did then intermeddle in Ecclesiastical Causes, and regulate the Affairs of Religion, and had Jurisdiction in the Government of the Church.

The Ark of the Covenant which none might look into, or so much as touch it, but the

1 Tim.
ii. 2.

- 2 Sam. vi. the Priests alone: Was yet so far under the
 2 Sam. xv. Government and Authority of King *David*,
 that he commanded it to be removed first to
 this Place and then to that. He also distri-
 2 Chron. buted the several *Courses* both of the *Priests*
 xxiii, xxiv. and *Levites*, and gave the *Levites* a new Law
 —xxiv. for their Offices, that they who before began
 not their Attendance till the *Thirtieth* Year
 of their Age should now begin it at the *Twen-*
 2 Chron. tieth. He took the Ark from the Taberna-
 i. 3, 5. cle of the Congregation, and leaving that
 behind at *Gibeon*, he built a new Tent for it
 at *Jerusalem*. How came he to meddle so
 much with that which was in the Peculiar
 2 Chron. Custody of the Priests? The like was after-
 xxiv. wards done by *Hezekiah*, who also by his
 —xxiii. 4. Royal Decree appointed the Passover to be
 kept, and called all the Ten Tribes of *Israel*
 to *Jerusalem* to the Celebration of it, who
 had been hindred from it for a long time be-
 fore. Solomon thrust out *Abiathar* from being
 1 Kings Priest unto the Lord. Which, let the Adver-
 ii. 27, 35. saries say what they will to evade it, was as
 much a Deprivation as any one of those they
 now complain of; and when he had done
 this, he put *Zadock the Priest* in the Room of
Abiathar. The Altar of *Bethel* was destroy'd
 by King *Josiah*; Idolatry was frequently pu-
 nished and suppressed by their Kings, and the
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suffering Religion to be corrupted by introducing Evil and Idolatrous Novelties into the Worship of God, is often charged as a Crime and a Blemish in the Administration of their Government. Now as the Instances mentioned in which they did exert their Power, were undeniable Acts of Church Government and Ecclesiastical Authority: So the Charge and Imputation of Guilt upon them in their Neglects of this kind, plainly shew that they had a just Authority and a rightful Jurisdiction therein. And if the Jewish Kings were allowed to have Power and Authority in Ecclesiastical Matters, and the Priesthood claimed no Independent Power in Church Government, under that Dispensation in which the Administration of Divine Offices was as much separated from the Secular Magistrates as it is now under the Gospel: Some very good Reason, some strong Proof, some very bright and clear Evidence should be produced to convince one, that the Jurisdiction which Kings exercised under one Dispensation is quite taken away by the other.

ESPECIALLY too, when this claimed Authority is not to be limited to Articles of Faith, and Matters of Divine Revelation only; but is extended to a Judicial Cognizance in all our *moral Actions*, as well as in those

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that are purely religious. And for the Kings and Potentates of the World not to submit to the Sanctions and Determinations of such Men in all Cases of *Morality*; is arrogantly called *Disobedience* to their *spiritual Superiors*, and *Rebellion* against the *Legates* and *Vicegerents of Christ*. And to restrain ecclesiastical Persons in any extravagant Proceedings of this Kind, is represented by some Men as downright *Persecution*.

Vindic.
Prop. 21.

WHAT an Original Piece of spiritual Pride is this? I would desire any Reader seriously to consider, that if such Doctrines as these had been preached by the Apostles and Primitive Christians, Whether it would not have been the greatest Disadvantage imaginable to the Propagation of the Gospel. And whether it would not have given all the Secular Potentates of the World a great and invincible Prejudice against it? What Heathen Emperor or King would have embraced this Religion, or given any Countenance at all to the Profession of it, who should have been told, That in the very Minute that this Religion was professed by him, and became established in his Dominions, he was to lose one half of his Authority over his People? That he was no longer to have that Fullness of Jurisdiction and Power which

which he had before, and which other Kings and Emperors enjoy'd round about him; but was now to give up his Sovereignty and Supremacy in all *Spiritual, Ecclesiastical Causes*, and in all *Moral Actions*, into the Hands of his spiritual Governors of that Church, of which he was now becoming a Member? He is now no longer to claim an universal Supremacy in his Dominions, but himself becomes a *Subject* to his *Subjects*, and their *spiritual Inferior*; the Bishops in his Kingdom, being as so many *Kings*, and *spiritual Monarchs*, who have a Divine Right to tie up his Hands from having any thing to do in the Government of the Church, or in Matters of Religion? Would not all the Secular Potentates in the World have spurn'd at, and despised the Preachers of so senseless a Religion, as an Imposture and a Cheat, that under a Pretence of Godliness, was contrived to wrest one great Part of their Authority out of their Hands? And would not such an Attempt as this too deservedly have *caused the Word of Truth to be evil spoken of*? Most assuredly it would. And yet this is the very Thing that an Independent Authority in Church Government naturally, and universally tends to.

DR. HICKES is pleased to say, *Constit.* p. 76. That the *Governors of the Church* lose Nothing of their *Power, Authority, or Jurisdiction* by admitting *Sovereign Princes* into the Church. I beg leave to ask then, Whether it is not altogether as reasonable, both for the Honour and Interest of Christianity, that Christian Princes should lose Nothing of their *Temporal Authority* by embracing this our Holy Religion? And if it be, I am sure that the Schemes which are now laid out for Kings and Princes to rule by, under the Church's independent Power, cannot be of God; because they make Spoil and Havock of the secular Powers, and rob them of one entire Branch of their Sovereignty and Dominion. And yet this is not the worst Evil that attends this Claim. For,

V. IT not only robs Kings of all Sovereignty in religious and spiritual Affairs; but is extended also to their Administration of the Temporal. I have already observed, That these Gentlemen bring all the *moral Actions* of humane Life, under the peculiar Cognizance of the spiritual Government of the CHURCH. Every Thing in which the Consciences of Men are concern'd, they claim, as falling wholly within this spiritual Jurisdiction.

diction. If the King and Parliament pass such and such Laws, not in Relation to the Doctrines or Worship of Christianity, but as to the Settlement of the Civil Government : These Independent Churchmen assume a Power of Judging, whether those Laws have a sufficient Authority to bind the Subjects to obey them. When the KING directs Prayers to be made to GOD for the Blessings of His Providence upon the NATION and its GOVERNMENT ; if these spiritual Judges do not like them they presently brand them, as *curfed Prayers, wicked and Blasphemy*, and *contrary to the essential Righteousness of God*. They take upon them to determine, Whether the KING's Title to the Throne be lawful and right ; and if they happen to be embarked in another Interest, in Defiance of all the Laws and National Establishments, they call Him *an Usurper* ; and whisper Treason and Rebellion thereby into the Ears of all the People. They leave not the STATES of the Realm, and the full Powers of the LEGISLATURE a sufficient Authority to settle the Government we live under ; to make Provision for the Safety of the Kingdom, in the extremest Dangers ; without submitting to their particular Notions and Principles in Political Affairs without allowing

Pag. 8.
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ing them to be the only *competent Judges* in Matter of Justice and Conscience, as to the Obligations of the Constitution of their Country. Here it is that they would more especially exercise their *Independent* and *Incontroulable Authority*. Was ever Spiritual Tyranny superior to this! And yet our Modern Assertors of the CHURCH's *Independent Power* are gone so far in it, that those who will not adhere inseparably to them in these exorbitant Principles and Practices, are represented as *excommunicate from the Church of Christ*, as accursed of GOD, and in a State of Damnation. Those who are Strangers to our Circumstances, will not think it credible, that these Men are all this While running into Measures, which if they could bring to their desired Perfection, must end in the Extirpation of our Holy Religion, and the final Ruin of all the Liberties and Happiness of our Country. All this is so contrary to the Practice of CHRIST, and to the true Temper and Spirit of the Gospel, and the Design of the Christian Religion, that if Nothing more were to be said upon it, that alone proves undeniably that such Church Authority cannot be from GOD; CHRIST tells us in express Words, That *His Kingdom is not of this World*, and He himself refused to be

Joh. xvi.
36.

so much as a Judge between two private Men in the Division of a small Estate. Luke xii. 14.

But our Modern Independents in Church Government, make themselves Judges of Kings, and of their Titles to their Thrones. They, in effect, divide the Kingdoms of the Earth according to their Decisions and Determinations. By a pretended Supremacy from CHRIST, they put a Check upon the Legislature in the Laws that they provide for the Security of the Nation, and labour to controul the States of the Realm in the Administration of their secular Affairs. They sanctify even Sedition and Rebellion by their *spiritual* Authority, and take upon them to absolve the Subjects from all the strictest Oaths whereby they have sworn Allegiance to their King. They endeavour to bind it upon the Consciences of Men, to set up one King, and to dethrone another, according to their personal Sentiments and Opinions. Now I would willingly be informed by them what Part of CHRIST's Commission it is that gives them this Authority; or that in any disputable Titles to the Throne makes them the Judges of it? And yet the Modern Independents in Church Government, do not only assume all this to themselves; but they also lay as much Stress on their own Notions and Assertions

Affertions of this Kind, as tho' they had a Spirit of Infallibility, or an immediate Revelation from Heaven. What less than this, could induce them to charge all the Great Men of our Church, however learned, and equally pious with themselves, as Teaching, and Acting, and Praying, contrary to the essential Righteousness of God, only because they teach, and act, and pray, contrary to their particular Sentiments and Schemes in Civil Government? What is this, but to arrogate to themselves a Spirit of Infallibility in the Interpretation of those Scriptures on which they build their Notions and Opinions? Will not the Reader stand still here and Pause a little, and Question the Truth of what I say? Will he not think it incredible that spiritual Men should approach so near to Blasphemy, as to set up their own political Principles, as the infallible Tests of Truth and Righteousness? Certain it is, that CHRIST's Commission is of another Nature, and never was intended to authorize the Governors of the Church to frame the Government of Nations too according to their disputable Models and controverted Schemes; and to damn all Mankind as Hereticks, and Schismaticks, and Rebels, who will not come in to them, and

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desert the legal Constitutions of their Country. This is foreign to the Business of the Gospel; the Propagation of the Christian Faith, by Preaching, and Baptizing, and Administering Sacraments, and Training up Christians in Holiness and Devotion, is a Sphere at so great a Distance from all this of Secular Government and Political Controversies, that God certainly never gave the Governors of the Church any Divine Authority therein. And therefore an *Independent* Authority in Church Governors, which is industriously set up to this End; must be an Imposture and a Cheat, and contrary to the Will of CHRIST and of GOD. And Bishops and Clergymen by Virtue of CHRIST's Commission may as well claim a Right to go into *Westminster-Hall* and turn out the Judges, as giving Judgment *contrary to the essential Righteousness of God*; as to teach the People, that it is a Sin to be subject to the Laws and Constitutions of the Kingdom where they live. This brings me to my

VI. LAST Argument, which is, That this Independent Authority in the Government of the CHURCH, is utterly inconsistent with the *Supremacy and Sovereignty* of all Secular Potentates. Two such Independent Authorities

thorities in the Government of the same Body of Men, appear utterly incompatible. They so frequently interfere, and thereby bring such Mischiefs and Distractions into the World, that they cannot possibly be both of them from GOD. He, who is a God of Peace and Order, and not of Confusion, must not be supposed to have intended any two such Powers without a Subordination of the one to the other.

THE Supporters of that Claim, being aware of this Argument, would evade it by saying, That the Mischiefs complained of, proceed not from the Inconsistency of two such Powers, but from the Encroachments of the two contending Parties. And that all this would be prevented effectually, if each would keep within their proper Limits, and neither of 'em

Regale &
Pontiff.
p. 15.

put their Sickle into the other's Harvest. This is smoothly and finely said indeed, but Nothing to the Purpose; because it is Arguing against plain Matter of Fact. For they both of them *claim a Right to the same Harvest*; and who then shall judge between them to preserve the Peace and Quiet of the Christian World? Are not all our present Contentions and Feuds about the uncontrollable *Supremacy* of the Governors of the Church in all Religious and Spiritual Causes? And is it not apparent undeniably,

undeniably, that the very End of Claiming such a Power, is, to protect some Men from the Authority of the STATE? How then is it possible that two such Contending supreme Sovereigns should exercise their several Powers, one to remove, and the other to support those Men; and yet the Subjects be bound to obey them both? How can two such Supremacies subsist in the same Body of Men, when almost every Act of the one influences the other? When in some Cases almost every Exercise of Spiritual Authority, one Way or other influences, and either weakens or controuls the Temporal? A certain Defender of this Spiritual, Ecclesiastical Independency, saw the Necessity of granting, That CHRIST gave the Church no Authority that could possibly interfere with the Civil Powers. This Assertion I own to be very true; and therefore if the *Non-jurors* will but grant me that, which I think no reasonable Man can deny, viz. That God has given to Secular Powers as full an Authority for the Support and Security of the STATE, as He has to the Spiritual for the Defence of the CHURCH; and consequently, that every Act of Independent Power of the Church, that interferes with the Civil Powers, is contrary to the Will of GOD, and to the Intention of

Regal. &
Pontif. p.
17.

CHRIST'S Commission : I readily join Issue with them upon this Cause, and am very willing to try the Force of this Principle in those particular Cases that are made the Occasion of our present Disputes. And they are, 1. The Election. 2. The Deprivation of Bishops and Clergymen.

I. As to the Election of Bishops and Clergymen, it is granted, That as the CHURCH has the sole Authority of *Ordaining* them, so with that they have of *Necessity* a common natural Right to take Care of the *Qualifications* of the Persons to be ordained, and employed in Divine Service. But then, it is indeed reasonable, that the CHURCH in the Exercise of this Power, should not claim a Divine Authority to thrust and force upon a Christian State such Bishops and Clergymen as are avowed Enemies to the Government and National Constitution where they live. For this is actually to *interfere with the Civil Powers*. It's highly reasonable that Kings and Princes should be well-assured of the Fidelity and Allegiance of their Clergy; seeing that They and their Government, have an Interest therein; and both the Peace and Safety of their Secular Affairs may be very much influenced by their good or evil Conduct.

duct. If therefore on this Account the Laws of the Land give to our Kings the Nomination of the Persons that are to be made Bishops; it is indisputably *interfering with the Civil Powers*, to say that they have no Right there to; and that every such Nomination is an Invasion of the CHURCH's Power. If the Measure of that Power be at all to be judged of by its Consistency with the Peace and Safety of the STATE, it is then as clear as any Demonstration in the *Mathematicks*, that CHRIST's Commission has given no such Independent Power in the Choice of Bishops; because that actually breaks in upon the temporal Power of Kings and Princes, even in the Administration of their National Government: For let us reflect, Is it not by Virtue of this pretended *Divine Right*, and *Independent Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction*, that we see such vile and scandalous Practices in our Days, as the Primitive Christians were wholly Strangers to; and would have Protested against with the utmost Abhorrence and Detestation? By Virtue of this pretended Independent Authority, the *Non-jurors* take upon them to *consecrate* Bishops, and *ordain* Priests, not only in Opposition to the STATE, but with a direct Intention, if it be possible, to overturn it. For the first Thing that such
Bishops

Bishops and Clergymen have to do, is to renounce all Allegiance to the KING upon the Throne, and all Regard to the Present Constitution of the Kingdom. To treat the KING as an *Usurper*, to teach a *Nullity* in all the Oaths that are taken to Him, tho' by most solemn Sanctions of the Law. To set up an Ecclesiastical Community, and gather Congregations against Him, and therein to pray for another pretended King, whom the Nation has solemnly abjured, and proclaimed a Traitor. Will not all this be called *Interfering with the Civil Powers*? If it be; I think then, it must be granted, that all this is directly contrary to CHRIST's Commission, and to the whole Design of it? If there be a Dispute about the Title to the Crown, most certainly the States of the Realm are the proper Judges and Determiners of the Matter: And CHRIST by his Commission, has given the Bishops and Pastors of his CHURCH no Divine Authority or Jurisdiction in such Determinations. If therefore the Governors of the Church, instead of taking Care, according to their Trust, that the Bishops and Clergy of the CHURCH, be Men of sober Lives, and sound Religion, will go so much farther as to claim a Divine Right in the Choice of all the Bishops exclusive of the Nomination of
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the Prince, only to embarrass his Government, and embroil his Affairs: It is as certain that such a Spiritual Power cannot be of GOD, as it is that all Secular Powers are of GOD. Because two such Independent Authorities in or over the same Body of Men, cannot possibly consist together. The one will inevitably *interfere* with, and be destructive of the other; and such inevitable Opposition, Confusion and Distraction in humane Society, could never be designed or intended by Almighty GOD. The like may be said

2. As to the Deprivation of Bishops and Clergymen.

I COULD heartily wish, there had been no Occasion for the unhappy Debate that I am now upon. And what I shall say upon it, I intend with all Deference to the unhappy Persons who were deprived. But seeing a pretended *Invalidity* in their Deprivation is made the Occasion of a *Schism* from our CHURCH, and of great Confusions in the Nation; Doubtless, common Justice ought to be done to the lawful Secular Powers we live under.

Now, if it be indeed true, that CHRIST has given no Power to his Church that interferes
with

with the Civil Powers; and most true it is, and necessary for the due Government of the World that it should be so; the Consequence of it is, That CHRIST by His Commission has given no such Authority to His CHURCH, as to keep Bishops and Clergymen in their respective Sees, when the STATE finds it necessary for the Safety of a Nation to turn them out. For this also is to set up Powers that are incompatible; both whose Commands cannot be obey'd, because they command contrary and inconsistent Things.

THIS was the Case of those unhappy Bishops and Clergy, who were deprived for not giving the usual Oaths of Fidelity to the Civil Government of King William. Their Principles and Practices, as to that Government, were such, that it was become impossible for them to execute their Spiritual Offices in the CHURCH, with any Security to the Peace and Safety of the STATE. They could not perform Divine Service in Publick, because they would not own the Authority of the King, who was to be prayed for therein; The Bishops could not ordain other Clergymen, for the same Reason; They could not do it without obliging them, by the Laws of the Land,

to own those Secular Powers, whom they themselves did not own. They could not govern the Clergy, as Bishops by the Laws of the Land are bound to govern them, without Teaching them, and Instructing them to teach their People the Duty of Obedience to that King, whom they themselves looked on as an unlawful King. Neither could they answer the Ends, or do the Business of the Government by sitting in Parliament, as the Law expects and requires, that all the Bishops of the Kingdom should do. Nay, in all their Exercise of Divine Offices, they must undeniably lie under a strong Byass and Temptation of instilling dangerous Doctrines, and Principles inconsistent with the Peace and Security of the Kingdom. Can it be supposed then, that any National Government wants a sufficient and *competent Authority* of removing such Bishops from their Sees, and of putting other Orthodox Bishops in their Room? And must They ask the Clergy's Leave to do this? Or must they borrow a *competent Authority* from the CHURCH to do this effectually? Miserable are the Princes who are in such a Case! Wretched is the Kingdom that wants a *competent Authority* to do any Thing which appears necessary to be done with any of its

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Subjects,

Subjects of what Order soever, to support it self, and preserve its own Authority. Who then can believe that Almighty God ever intended this? Those who object against the *Validity* of such a Deprivation, should consider two Things:

I. THAT there is no Persecution of Christianity in it. Had those Bishops been deprived for any Doctrines or Articles of the Christian Faith, it would have looked more plausibly on their Side, and might with more Reason have been called Persecution. Or, if upon their Deprivation, their Districts and Sees had been left destitute of Orthodox Bishops regularly consecrated to perform the Divine Offices, as others had done before them: This would have made a great Alteration in the Case. But when it is for an avowed Disaffection to the established Civil Government, and judged necessary for the Security of it; that *Necessity* proves it lawful, and answers all Objections that can possibly be brought against it. And therefore, to pretend that such a Deprivation is not *valid*, as to the People living within their Districts of such deprived Bishops, because it is not *Canonical*; is in effect saying nothing at all. For Deprivation signifies nothing to the Purpose,

Purpose, if it does not in the Effects of it, bind all the Consciences of the Subjects to disown the Authority of the Persons so deprived; and discharge them from all Obligations of future Submission to, and Communion with them. This is a Power without which Civil Government cannot stand: and therefore Secular Powers must be granted to have a *competent Authority* to all such Purposes; or else they are not only *Subjects and Inferiors*, but even *Slaves* to their *spiritual Sovereigns*, and must depend precariously on the Good-will and Favour of their Clergy, whether they shall sit easy and safe on their Thrones, or no. And all the Laws, and Canons, and Constitutions of the CHURCH, if they be wise, and good, and christian, must be made with a due Regard and Subserviency to this End, or else they lose all *their Validity*, and are to be looked upon as Nothing. For this is a sure Principle never to be disputed, That all National Governments have as sufficient and *competent* an *Authority* to do every Thing which is necessary to preserve the STATE, as the Bishops and Clergy can have for the Support of RELIGION and the CHURCH.

AND if this Authority will extend to the *valid* Deprivation of the disaffected, and dis-

Dr. Hickey's
Collect.
p. 32.

loyal Governors of the Church, the plain Consequence of it is, That all the Subjects of the Kingdom are in Duty and Conscience discharged from any farther spiritual Relation to, or Communion with the Persons so deprived. What is it then that our *Non-jurors* mean by Exclaiming against this, even as tho' it were a Sin against the Holy Ghost? To tell the World, That all other Bishops, who will not adhere to the deprived ones, *can perform no valid Acts of Priesthood; their Prayers are Sin, and their Sacraments, no Sacraments, and their Absolution, Null, and of no Force.* That all other Christians, who are not in the Communion of the deprived Bishops, *are cut off from the Church of Christ, can have no Benefit by His Promises, no Assistance of His Grace, no Mercy thro' His Blood. Nay, that altho' they die Martyrs for Christ, yet Martyrdom itself cannot make amends for this Sin.* If a Stranger to our Gospel were to hear this, he would certainly conclude, that Christianity aimed at Nothing more than the Exaltation of the Church's Power; and that Nothing greater was required to Salvation, than to own these deprived Bishops to be the Heads of it. Whereas, in Truth, the Commission given, is only to preach the Gospel, to administer the Sacraments, and to exercise such Offices, and

and such Powers, as shall be necessary to the Propagation of the Christian Religion: Without any Check upon Secular Potentates in their Administration of Civil Government, or any Exemption from their Jurisdiction. They have no Authority that interferes with Civil Powers. To confirm all which, it must not be forgotten,

2. THAT in this Deprivation the STATE took away no Power which the CHURCH truly and properly speaking gives. Dr. HICKES indeed, insinuates, p. 24. That *as only Bishops have from Christ a Right to ordain; so they only have a Right to deprive one another.* But this Argument is formed with more Cunning than Ingenuity, and the Opposition is not fairly put. It should not have been between *Ordaining* and *Depriving*; but *Ordaining* and *Deposing* from the Sacred Order of the Priesthood. In the one the CHURCH gives, in the other She takes away Her spiritual Authority. But *Depriving* is of another Nature; it leaves the Persons all the Catholick Authority which the CHURCH gave, if they can find Places where they may lawfully Exercise it; and only restrains them from doing so in such and such Dominions. It is chiefly Removing them from the Districts and Sees which they held of the Secular Powers, and thereby

by from all Right to the Exercise of their Spiritual Offices among any of the King's Subjects. And if Kings and Princes have not a competent Authority to do this, they are too weak to stand, and consequently, much weaker than GOD and CHRIST ever intended that Civil Government should be.

THE chief Objections to what is here delivered, are these three.

I. It is pleaded, *That there is such a Divine Relation between a Bishop and the People of his District, as no Secular Powers can take away.*

II. THAT the Authority in spiritual Affairs, here allowed to Kings and Princes, is contrary to the Practice and Principles of the first three Hundred Years.

III. THAT this is bringing the Church and its Clergy into Slavery.

I. As to the Divine Relation pretended to be between a Bishop and the People of his See or District: Pray, how comes that about? It is compared, I know, by some Men to Marriage. But who made that Match, or gave the divine Sanction to the Contract? Or if that were true, how comes there

there to be so many common Causes of Divorce? In short, this is the Notion of those only, who make every Thing that has been occasionally done by the Governors of the Church, to have been done by a divine and unchangeable Authority. But the only Way to judge rightly of this Matter, is, to consider what is the *original Ground* of that Relation, and by whose Designation and Authority it has been made. Now as to this,

1. I BELIEVE, that every Body will grant, That in promoting Bishops to such and such Sees, and Clergymen to their Districts or Parishes, a Regard ought, and will be had, to the Sentiments and the Judgment of the Spiritual Governors of the Church; who, as I said above, in Consequence of their Commission from CHRIST to plant and govern it, must be supposed Invested with a *Trust* as to the spiritual Qualifications of the Persons to be employed in Holy Offices. And this Care, and Trust, and just Authority, they are supposed to discharge in their Admission of Persons into Holy Orders. In which they have Authority to provide, that no Persons unqualified, should be admitted into the Service of GOD. But then, when the Church has effectually taken this Care, it must certainly be granted also in the

2. Second

2. *Second Place*, THAT Christian Princes and States have both an *Interest* in this Affair, and a *Trust* also committed to *Them* in providing proper Spiritual Guides and Pastors for their People. And where they have both an *Interest* and a *Trust*, it will be very hard to say, that they have no Authority. Suppose that the Governors of the CHURCH should incline to appoint such Persons as the STATE can have no Confidence in, or no Security from, must they be allowed no Authority, even where their Peace and Safety appear to be very deeply concern'd? Sure this is too unreasonable and absurd to be believed. Or, again, Suppose that the Governors of the CHURCH should be careless, and neglect providing for their Sees, would not the Temporal Powers be bound to supply that Defect, and to take Care that the People should not want proper Guides and Pastors? It is absurd then to think, that they have no Authority in a Matter which they are bound in Conscience to take Care of. Now as all this seems very agreeable to common Reason; let us go on, and consider

3. WHAT has been the Practice of the CHURCH in this Particular. And here we shall

shall find, that generally speaking, every One who appeared to have an Interest in the Management of Ecclesiastical Affairs were allowed to have an Influence, and some Power in the Designation of the Person to be employed in such a Place or District.

THE CHURCH commits a Catholick Power or Authority in Consecration or Ordination, which Authority is to be exercised so far as lawfully it may, thro' the whole CHURCH of CHRIST, without any Assignment of this or that particular Jurisdiction. So the Form of Consecration runs with us:

Receive ye the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Bishop in the Church of GOD. And that such was the Manner of Primitive Ordinations,

the Reverend and very Learned Dr. Potter, now Lord Bishop of Oxford, proves from hence, That Ministers were then sometimes ordained without any Designation at all to particular Districts. And indeed, without this general Commission in Ordination, I do not see how they could be said to be invested with a Spiritual Power or Authority thro' the Whole Christian Church. This Power then being thus convey'd by the Church; the Designation of the Persons to this or that particular District, was made several Ways. In the Apostles Time, such and such Persons were

Ch. Gov.
p. 452.

sent by them to such and such Cities, and great Towns, to minister therein, and govern the CHURCH according to the Directions given. But afterwards the Clergy of the vacant Diocese sometimes chose their own Bishop, and sometimes the eldest Presbyter succeeded in Course. But then, to shew that every Thing which the Bishops and Clergy at that Time did, was not done by a *Divine* Authority: What was sometimes done in this Affair by the Clergy, was sometimes done by the People also, when the Bishops of another Province advanced any new Bishop to a vacant See, it was always done with the Consent and Approbation of the People. Usually this Approbation and Consent of the People was had, as to the Person, before his Consecration. The forementioned Right Reverend Bishop has cited a Passage out of the *VIIIth* Book of the *Apostolical Constitutions*, c. 4. in which it is decreed, That *such a Bishop must be ordained as was elected by the People for his eminent Merit, and their Consent was to be a third Time asked.* And to the same Purpose there are several Passages in *St. Cyprian*, whereby it plainly appears, that the People had so much Authority, that they were usually consulted, and their Vote and Consent asked in the Designation of the Bishop that was to preside

preside over them. Which shews most plainly, that such a Designation was not made by the *divine appropriated Powers* of the Bishops and Clergy only. And it is very well known, that what the People had at the Beginning, came by Degrees into the Hands of Kings and Princes. They had the Nomination of Bishops to their several Sees; and I would therefore have a very good Reason given, why those Rulers who had Authority in Promoting them, should not be allowed the same in Removing them. Or how such a Removal can be called an *Invasion of the sacred Rights of the Priesthood*; when they were promoted by the Election or Nomination of the Laity, as well as of the Bishops?

I KNOW it will be said, That all this was only a prudent Condescension and Compliance with the People of their Flock, without any Authority. But to this I answer, Does not Voting, and Electing, and an almost constant and establish'd Usage of Consigning Persons to such and such Districts by Voting and Electing, look like a good Degree of Authority in the Matter? And would the Fathers of the Church have suffered all this, if they had had the same Notions with some in our Days? Would they have condescended so far, if they had known it to be

an *Invasion* of the CHURCH's *Independent Powers*? No certainly; their Practice in this Case, is a sufficient Demonstration that they had no such Sentiments.

AND indeed, how shall we judge, or how shall we know what are the CHURCH's peculiar Rights, and what not; but by the Words of CHRIST's Commission, and the Practice of the most Primitive Churches thereupon? The Performance of those Sacred Offices which CHRIST by His Commission has taken away from the Civil Powers, and vested in a distinct Order of Men, we own to be the peculiar Authorities of the CHURCH. And accordingly, the Primitive Fathers did not allow the Laity to have Authority therein. They never condescended so far as to suffer them either to consecrate the *Eucharist*, or to lay on Hands in Ordination. When therefore as to the Designation of Bishops to such and such particular Districts, CHRIST's Commission gives no Restraining or Appropriating Rules at all, and the constant Practice of the CHURCH has been to admit the Laity to have an *Interest* and a *Vote* therein, and to promote by their *Election*; I do not know what can confute the Claim of a *Divine Relation*, and an *Independent Authority* herein, if this will not.

It is then the Designation of Bishops and Clergymen to their several Districts be no Part of the Church's sacred and unalienable Rights ; certainly the Removal or Deprivation of such Persons, can be no Invasion of them ; because doubtless they who have a competent Authority to promote, must be allowed to have the same also to Remove.

THE Conclusion of the Whole then, is, There is no such Thing in our Days as a Clergyman's having a Divine Right to his District. His Claim and Right is wholly Human and Legal ; founded on the Laws of the Land, and the established Constitutions of the Church and Country in which we live. Consequently then, what the State does in a legal Way in such Deprivations, is done by a competent Authority ; it is Valid in all Respects ; and binds the Consciences of all Men. It transfers the Obligations, as to Religious Communion, from the former Possessor to the latter. It makes it our Duty to adhere to such Bishops, as in such Cases, the Laws of the Land regularly advance : And it makes our adhering to the Communion of the Bishops so deprived, to be both sinful and schismatical.

II. THE

II. THE second Objection is, That what I have here advanced, seems not to agree with the *Practice* and *Principles* of the CHURCH for the first three hundred Years.

As to the Practice of the CHURCH in those Times, I have in some Measure thus accounted for it already. That it proceeded from the Exigencies and *Necessity* of Affairs at the Time when the Christians were either under Persecution, and so were constrained to act in Opposition to their Secular Governors, because Christianity could not otherwise be propagated : Or else, it was done under the Connivance and Permission of such Temporal Powers. In either of which Cases, what was *necessary* to be done by the Bishops and Governors of the CHURCH for the Promotion of the Christian Religion, they undoubtedly had a Divine Right and Authority from God to do. But then, in such Cases, the CHURCH did not claim a Divine Authority of Excluding the Jurisdiction of the Emperors and Secular Governors; but they excluded themselves, by refusing to intermeddle in this Government. Even the mildest of the Heathen Emperors, who, as *Tertullian* tells us, *Apol. cap. v.* forbid the Christians to be enquired after, or persecuted, seem to have

have dealt with them, only as *Gallio* the Deputy of *Achaia* did, *I will be no Judge of such Matters.* When therefore the Christian Bishops and Clergy were so far either neglected, or favoured by their Heathen Governors as to be left to themselves; they had Nothing more to do than to make wise Laws, and proper Canons, and see them duly executed. And if against those, who among themselves were mutinous, and turbulent, and schismatical, they pleaded the just Obligation of their Sanctions, and set forth very emphatically the Disorder and Guilt of those who in such Cases revolted from their proper Bishop, and despised his Authority, and separated from his Communion; they certainly Argued very justly, and Acted very rightly. All Christians were bound in Conscience to conform themselves to such good and wise Rules, and to submit to such just and lawful Authority. But what is all this, to the Rights of the Temporal Powers, whose Authority does not appear so much as once to have fallen under their Debates for the first three hundred Years.

WHEN the Romans had conquered *Judea*, they yet left the *Jews* in a great Measure to the Management of their own Civil Government. And what *Herod*, or the high Priest

Acts xviii
15.

Priest and the *Synhedrim*, in such Cases, enacted or ordained, was doubtless in Conscience to be obeyed; and it was a Sin to be mutinous and seditious against them. But sure this Privilege could never be extended to the exclusion of the Power and Authority of the *Roman* Emperors. So here, the *Roman* Emperors put the Christians under a Necessity of Acting independently on the Temporal Power, because they would not concern themselves therein. But this does not at all prove, that therefore all Secular Powers must for ever be excluded. I am amazed therefore, to find such a Fondness, as I do, for the *Rules* and *Sentiments* of the *Cyprianick Age* in this Controversy; I cannot but smile at Mens Attempts to determine it by the Practice and Principles of *St. Cyprian*, or any other Father of those Times. All that they say, is out of the Question, and foreign to the Purpose. They only plead the Power and Authority of the *Church's* Sanctions among themselves; and the Guilt of separating from the Communion of their Bishops, while there was no other who would meddle in the Government of it. In such Cases, theirs was the only proper Authority to be regarded; because the Secular Powers had declined all Jurisdiction therein. But this is no more a

Proof

Proof that the Authority of Kings and Princes must for ever be excluded from all Ecclesiastical Affairs, than the Decrees of *Herod*, and the Jewish *Sanhedrim*, are a Proof that *Julius*, and *Augustus Caesar* had no Authority in *Judea*.

WHAT shall we say then to Dr. *Hickes*, who would send all Christian Emperors and Kings to these very Times to learn new Lessons, and to know from these Examples what Power they ought to exercise in Ecclesiastical Affairs? Certainly this is a very odd Way of Arguing, That because Heathen Emperors would not meddle with the Government of the Christian Church, therefore Christian Kings and Princes must not. As tho' the Neglects and Disregards of the one, were to be a Bar and an Interdict to the just Rights and Claims of the other. That this is the Truth of the Case, and that there is no more than this in it, will be undeniably plain and clear, Prop. 26.

3. FROM the great Concessions and large Compliances that the Christian Bishops and Clergy soon made when the Roman Emperors favoured their Interest, and interposed their Authority in the Management and Settlement of the Affairs of the CHURCH. If the Primitive Fathers had had the same Sentiments with Dr. *Hickes* and his Friends, as to the CHURCH's Divine Right to an Independent

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Authority;

Authority; it is impossible that they should have given in to the Authority and Jurisdiction of the Emperors, as they are found to have done. And whether they will impute it to the Ignorance of the Primitive Christians, or whether they will make them the first Betrayers of the Church's sacred Rights, I leave to themselves; let them account for it as they please. I am contented to observe,

Author. from a very learned Treatise of our present
Christian Prin. c. 2. great and good Archbishop, who has support-
ed his Assertions with Authorities which are
Sect. 4. indisputable, That no sooner did the * Chri-
c. 17, 21, tian Emperors concern themselves in the Af-
27, 34, 35. fairs of the Church and the Government of it,

* *Euseb.* but the Bishops admitted them to summon
Vit. Const. Councils
Lib. III.
c. 6, 7, 10,
12, 13, 17.

Constantine called the first general Council by his Imperial Authority, appointed the City *Nice* in *Bithynia* for the Place of their Meeting, and on the Day set for opening the Synod he came and sat among them, and Reasoned with them and composed their Differences.

Ibid. Lib. IV. c. 42, 43. He summoned another Council to meet at *Tyre*. A. D. 335; and Threatned those who disobey'd his Summons with Banishment, or Ejection out of his See; afterward he adjourned it to *Jerusalem*. To this Council *Athanasius* came in pure Obedience to the Emperor, and appealed from it to his Authority.

Ib. Lib. I. c. 44. *Eusebius* commends *Constantine* for his Piety and Religious Care in all this.

Dr. Cave. Hist. Lit. Vol. 2. p. 152. In the Assembly at *Carthage*. A. D. 411. *Marcellinus* the Emperors Commissioner directed the Manner of their Proceeding, appointing Seven Bishops only of a Side to enter into Debate; and in the end gave Sentence in favour of the *Orthodox*. And when upon *Marcellinus* his Death the *Donatists* would have had all that had been done rescinded;

Councils by their *Imperial Authority*; to appoint the *Time* and *Place* of their Meeting; to direct the *Matter* to be treated on, and the *Manner* of their Proceeding. To *Preside* in, and *Regulate* their Debates; to exercise *Authority* over their Declarations and *Canons*, sometimes to *Revoke*, and sometimes to *Suspend* their Decrees. Sometimes they not

rescinded; *Honorius* confirmed their Decrees and made them *Valid*.

Ib. p. 158, &c. Upon the Feuds, and contrary Decrees in the Council of *Ephesus*, A. D. 431. between *John* Patriarch of *Antioch*, and *Cyril* of *Alexandria* against *Nestorius*, *Theodosius* the Emperor commands all that had been done on both Sides to be rescinded; and upon a full and true Information of what had past, he confirm'd the Decrees made against *Nestorius*.

As to *Imperial Laws* in Ecclesiastical Affairs I will mention a Few only out of the Code and Novells of *Justinian*. Cod. Lib. I. Tit. iii. cap. 8. If a Clergyman gave false Witness in a Pecuniary Case, he was to be suspended from his Office for Three Years; if in a Criminal Cause, to be Degraded from the Priestly Office, *clericatus honore nudatus, &c. ib.*

Novel. Coll. ix. Tit. vi. 123. cap. x. A Clergyman playing at Tables, or standing by to lay Wagers, or look on, was to be suspended for three Years; *jubemus tribus annis, a venerabili Ministerio prohiberi. ib. c. 17.*

He that shall give or take Money to procure the Election or Ordination of a Minister, was to be degraded; *a gradu Sacerdotis retrahatur. ib. c. 31.*

A Bishop not Consecrated according to some particular Imperial Constitutions was to be deposed. *Jubemus hunc omnibus modis Episcopatu depelli, Novel. ix. Tit. vi. 123, 1.*

A Presbyter ordained before examination, if he had been accused as unfit, was to be deposed, *a Sacerdotio repellatur. c. 2.*

A Bishop deserting his See and not returning in a set Time was to be Deprived. *Ab Episcopatu expelli. ib. c. 9.*

If a Bishop or Presbyter excommunicates any without hearing his Cause, the Person unjustly excommunicated shall be Absolved by another Presbyter, and he that unjustly excommunicated him, shall himself be excommunicated. *ib. c. 11.*

not only made Laws about Church Government, without the Clergy; but even regulated their Qualifications, and punished their Miscarriages; sometimes with Commands to the Church to Degrade them, and sometimes to Excommunicate 'em. They took upon them to judge of the Controversies between the Bishops; suspended one, and set up another; and threaten'd the Refractory with *Deprivation*, if they but disputed the Authority of their Summons. These Things they did sometimes at the Request of the Church, and often with hearty Thanks for what they had done. And those Ages knew no such Thing as disputing the competent Authority by which they acted, or the Validity of their Sentences; so long as Nothing was done by them to the Detriment of the Christian Faith or Religion. This shews most plainly, that what was practised by the Independent Authority of the Bishops and Clergy

If a Bishop that was deprived, or deposed, *Sacerdotio pulsus*, presumed to return to the City he had belonged to, he was to be confined in a Monastery. *ib.*

A Bishop permitting a Deacon to Marry after he was ordained was to be deprived; *expellatur ab Episcopatu*, and a Presbyter so Marrying was to be degraded; *expellatur a clero. ib. c. 14.*

Many more Laws of this kind equivalent to our Acts of Parliament, might be mentioned; and they all demonstrate that the Christians of those Ages knew no such Principle, as the Independent Power of the Church in Ecclesiastical Affairs.

gy for the first three hundred Years, was only out of *Necessity*, and not in a Claim of any Divine Right to exclude the Secular Powers.

And now I come to the

III. AND last Objection. Some are apt to think the Principles I advance too prejudicial to the CHURCH'S Interest and Advantage, that they tend too much to oppress and enslave Her. But I hope, I have not laid my self open deservedly to any such Charge. I have granted it a divine unalienable Right to the Holy Offices of all Religious Ministrations, to the Power of the Keys and to Ordination. I have allowed it a natural and common Right to all the general Powers of Government, and owned that by Virtue of CHRIST'S Commission, it has a Trust useful to it in all its Exigencies; and an Authority to do every Thing in the Exercise of its Spiritual Powers, that is necessary to be done for the Propagation and Support of the Christian Religion. Where then is the Slavery or Oppression in these Principles? Or what is it that we can by the Authority of God and CHRIST claim more? Other Privileges and Authorities, may be granted to it by the STATE: But of its own Right, I am

not

not convinced that it can pretend to more than these.

I AM, in Truth, very sensible, that the Clergy are in some Mens Esteem and Opinion very low and mean; and I hope, I shall always carry a ready Inclination to do my Endeavour to support both the Honour and the true Interest of the Order. But, as all the Contempt that we seem to lie under, is either with Men of profligate Principles, and wicked Lives, whose Reproaches can do us but little or no Harm; or else with those, who take Offence at our Carriage and Conduct: So Nothing certainly will go farther to raise our Character, and promote our Interest, and engage Kings and States to entrust us with additional Honours and Powers, than our Prudence and Piety, and Modesty, and great Humility, which are none of them inconsistent with a due Regard to our just Authority. And while these Virtues and Graces are found to shine thro' all our Conduct, we may vindicate our real Rights without any Scandal or great Offence. But if we be vain and imprudent in our Behaviour; troublesome and turbulent in our Conduct, and grasp at Power and Authority in the Church, only to support Factionous Parties, and to raise Tumults and Seditions against the STATE: All

this

this will really do us harm. The Adversary will not fail to make all the Advantages that they can of it, and we thus give them too just a handle thereto. And this which is disagreeable to the true Temper and Spirit of the Gospel, will have yet a worse influence to our mighty Disadvantage. It will make us cheap and mean in the Eyes of those Wise and Good Men, by whose deserved Favour and Interest the Dignity and Character of our Holy Order should be supported.

LET any Man of common Understanding judge what the World will think or say of those Claims and Pretensions to Divine Power and Authority, which apparently minister only to Ambition, and Pride, and Faction; but are not at all serviceable to the Interest of true Religion. Such are the Pretences that I have so often mentioned already of the Governors of the Church being *Spiritual Kings, Princes, Lords, Legates, and supreme Monarchs* in the *Church Regent*, instead of the *Church Militant*; and having a Share of CHRIST'S *Kingly Power* in his *spiritual Kingdom*, as well as of his Priesthood. In consequence of this, to make all Christian Kings, and Princes, and States, their *spiritual Inferiors* and *Subjects*, from whom, *Submission* and *Obedience* is to be expected in all Religious Matters, under the Penalty

nalty of Excommunication, and consigning them over to the Devil.

IN the Name of God, what Advantage will all this be to Religion? How naturally do such Pretensions put Mankind upon enquiring, What Use the Clergy have made of this Authority in Times past, when they had it in their Hands? And when upon several Passages and Instances in History, they can tell us, that thro' this very Power, Religion has been depraved and corrupted by the Clergy themselves, who claim it: What Advantage will this be to the Honour, and Credit, and Reputation of our Holy Order? Will not every notorious Miscarriage committed under the Covert of a *Divine Power from Christ in all Spiritual Causes*; occasion his whole Commission to be evil spoken of, and turn the very Name of *divine Right* into Banter and Ridicule, and a Name of Contempt and Derision; and give too plausible a Ground for the scandalous Imputation of *Priestcraft*? Who must bear the Blame of all this? To whom is all this Contempt of the Clergy to be imputed? In too great a Measure, to the blameable Arrogance, and boundless Ambition, and spiritual Pride of some Clergymen. Mankind often fall the lower, by aspiring too high. The Name of the Virgin *Mary* was
always

always venerable, and treated with great Respect among Christians, until some began to adore her as a Goddess. And Nothing has brought Her to be so disrespectful-ly treated, as the Idolatry of Men in Worshipping her. And so I in my Conscience believe, That where there has been no scandalous Immorality of Life, Nothing has made our Sacred Order meaner, or lower in their Interest and Esteem, than the claiming under GOD and CHRIST more Power than They ever intended to bestow upon us.

AND especially *then* are these Pretences scandalous and disadvantageous to our Character, *when* the Spiritual Authority of the Priesthood, is set up in Opposition to the STATE; and made use of as a Check upon the Secular Powers, and a Means to weaken them in their Authority, and to cramp them in the Administration of Civil Government. I verily believe, that the Christian CHURCH has lost more of Her true Interest by this, than by any other Means whatsoever. In that when the Lay Powers recover themselves out of such injurious Oppressions, they never fail to make very large and ample Repisals. And here, I must beg leave to remark, That this Claim of an *Independent*

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Power

Power in Ecclesiastical and Spiritual Affairs, has not, that I know of been set up by any of the Clergy of our Reformed CHURCH from Her first Reformation untill the late Happy Revolution. And as it was then first set on foot by the *Non-jurors* in Defence of the Deprived Bishops and in Opposition to King WILLIAM and his Government : So has it ever since been chiefly held up by those who have had little or no Affection for our National Establishment and Constitution from that Time. And the Scandalous Part of all this Scuffle in Controversy, and a Schismatical Separation from our CHURCH, is not made on the Account of our Holy Religion, and in Defence of the Powers by which that is to be Preserved ; but only in Behalf of a few particular Men, and by those who are confessedly in the Interest of the *Pretender*, and who have Nothing more at Heart than this groundless and unreasonable Schism in the CHURCH to dispose the Hearts of the *English* People to another Rebellion against the STATE. Had it not been for the serviceableness of this Doctrine to breed such Confusions among us, and to throw us into Factions and seditions, it had never been set on Foot at first. And if all other Methods of serving and supporting the *Pretender's* Cause had

had not been baffled and made ineffectual, it had never been revived now. For while they had Hope from other Means, These were laid asleep. And if Men were not blinded and infatuated above all Measure : This is Demonstration clear enough, that no such Ecclesiastical Power can be given by God and CHRIST. The foremention'd Concession of our Adversaries being a most certain and indisputable Truth : *That Christ has given no Authority to his Church, that can interfere with the Civil Powers.*

To make an end ; I think I have plainly and clearly proved, that altho' by CHRIST'S Commission the Divine Offices of all Christian Religious Ministrations are Appropriated to the Bishops and Clergy only : Yet the General Governing Powers of this Divine Society are not. That as these belong to it only of that *Common Right* which naturally belongs to all Societies, and as they are *necessary* to the Attainment of that End for which it was Instituted of God ; so consequently they have nothing in 'em to exclude the Jurisdiction of temporal Governors. Because those temporal Governors have the very same natural and common Right over all their Subjects, and in all Cases and Causes, to do every Thing that shall be found necessary to the Support

and Preservation of the STATE; which the others can pretend to Claim for the Support and Preservation of the CHURCH. Nay farther, That it would be no certain Advantage to Religion for the CHURCH to be possess'd of such Authority. That it would rob Kings and Princes of one great Branch of their Sovereignty; and may be, and often has been, used to defeat even their Civil Administrations and to shake their Thrones, and to Ruin their Dominions. And in a Word that such an Independent Authority is Incompatible with the Supremacy of Secular Princes, whose Affairs must inevitably be influenced and controul'd thereby. Therefore too such inconsistent Supremacies cannot be believed to be derived both from God.

IN Consequence of all this, I have shew'd, That Princes have an Authority both in the Election, and also in the Deprivation of Bishops, if they be disloyal and disaffected to them. That without such a Power, Government may be made too weak to subsist, and may be in Danger of being Overturned by the Power of the Clergy. That as this is what Christ's Commission never was intended for, so consequently all such Deprivations made by the legal Authority of the STATE are good and *Valid* to all Intents and Purposes, and oblige the Consciences of all the Subjects.

THE

THE Conclusion of all this is, That the Deprivation of the late *Non-juring* Bishops was in all respects *Valid*; that the People of their several Sees are thereby discharged from all Submission, and Duty, and spiritual Communion, and Relation to them. That they have no longer any lawful Authority in our CHURCH; but we as Christians are bound to adhere to the Religious Communion of those whom the King by the Laws of the Land shall Promote into their Places. And in a Word, that the contrary Practice in leaving the Communion of this established CHURCH, and setting up Religious Assemblies under the pretended Authority of such Deprived Bishops or their Adherents: Is very Wicked and sinful in the Sight of G O D, and an undoubted Schism from the Communion of the *Church of England*.

I WILL only add, that as these have been the constant Doctrines and Principles of the *Church of England* from the Beginning of the Reformation down to our Times: So they had not now been disputed had it not been in favour of the *Pretender* and of *Popery*.

F I N I S.

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ERRATA.

*Page 14. line 21. read Modification. p. 15. l. 6. r. Power
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